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TECHNICAL NOTE

FOREST INSECTS AND DISEASES IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND NATIONAL PARK IN 1986.

Personnel of the Forest Insect and Disease Survey regularly survey national parks for forest insect and disease conditions. Some of the conditions encountered in Prince Edward Island National Park in 1986 are discussed briefly below.

SPRUCE BUDWORM was again the most prevalent insect on white spruce and balsam fir in the Park. Defoliation, occurring in patches, was generally light and moderate, near Cavendish, where many older white spruce lost 80% of 1986 needles. In Prince Edward Island, a total of about 98 000 ha of forested land was affected in 1986, with the most severe infestation occurring in Queens County.

BIRCH CASEBEARER, a casebearing insect which causes browning of white birch, wire birch and alder leaves, caused up to 70% leaf browning of wire birch and 40% browning of white birch and alder between Dalvay and the Park boundary at Grand Tracadie. Light leaf browning of these hosts was common elsewhere in the Park.

BALSAM BARK WEEVIL feeds on the inner bark of balsam fir and spruce. Attacks by this insect intensified in 1985 on white spruce near Dalvay Beach and the stems of mature trees supported high populations. Four trees were killed in 1986, the remainder will probably succumb to attack in 1987.

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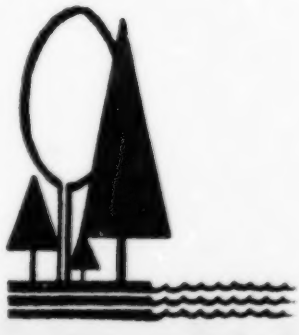

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WINTER DRYING and SALT SPRAY DAMAGE, two related conditions which are usually perennial problems in the Park, occurred again in 1986. Many conifers, located in exposed areas, including white spruce and red pine, suffered dieback. The area most afected was between Covehead Bay and Dalvay, where up to 40% of needles turned red on some white spruce trees and 10% of the needles were red on exposed red pine trees.

FALL WEBWORM. Webs, spun by this insect, were common but not numerous on roadside alder and cherry trees in the Brackley Beach area and between Dalvay and Covehead Harbour.

WINTER DAMAGE, thought to be caused by freezing rain, was observed on some red pine trees at Dalvay. Up to 10% of 1985 shoots were broken or scarred on about 20% of trees near the Park entrance.

NEEDLE RUST damage, caused by the balsam fir needle rust, was at a low level in 1986. Less than 5% of the needles were infected on about 40% of understory trees at Dalvay.

WHITE PINE WEEVIL killed the leaders of a few young white spruce trees between Dalvay and a point 3 km west.

BALSAM GALL MIDGE is a small orange larva, which feeds inside galls on balsam fir needles, was again found causing very light needle loss on understory trees at Dalvay and Brackley Beach.

MOUNTAIN-ASH SAWFLY. Colonies of yellow green larvae caused 60% defoliation of one mountain-ash tree near Stanhope.

GYPSY MOTH - an insect introduced from Europe to Massachusetts in 1869 is now the most serious defoliator of hardwoods in the northeastern United States. The insect has recently been found in parts of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick but these stages have not yet been found in Prince Edward Island. An adult pheromone-trapping program is conducted annually in the Park. In 1986 all traps were negative. Visitors are requested to report any suspected gypsy moth finds to Parks personnel who in turn will report this to the Forest Insect and Disease Survey.

- L.J. Coady
Forest Insect and Disease Survey

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